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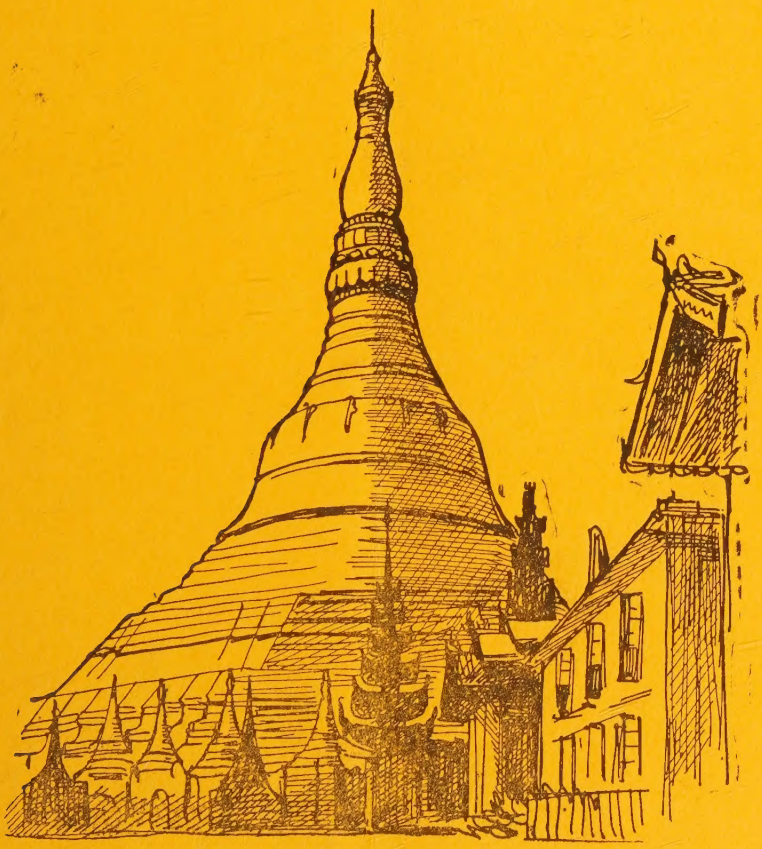

Featuring....

BUDDHISM AMID TRANSITION

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BUDDHISM AMID TRANSITION

Prepared by

Russell E. Brown

Towering over the city of Rangoon, the Shwe Dagon Pagoda looks today much as it did in Judson's day when he moved into his house out near the execution gate at the outskirts of early 19th century Rangoon.

The almost 150 years since then have brought many changes in the face of the city, most of them gradual and evolutionary. But today we feel that we are in the midst of rapid and sudden change and development in this Golden Land of Pagodas. And the changes are not solely due to war and dislocation, nor to the vast shifts in population, or even to the sudden rising of factory or radar antenna. For the great changes are in the deep currents of thought and attitude, of contesting ideologies. These challenges of ideas are the real struggle in Asia today, and they call us to feature in this issue a few thoughts about Buddhism amid this kind of transition.

We are especially grateful to Dr. Paul Clasper of our Burma Divinity School for his thought-provoking article on Buddhist Christian Encounter which he has permitted us to condense for this issue.

BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTER IN BURMA

by Paul D. Clasper

BURMA is a land of significance for both Christians, especially Baptists, and Buddhists. It is a place where the impact of both the Wheel of Buddhism and the Cross of Christ have been felt. It is a place where Christians and Buddhists mingle freely; where the Christ and the Buddha meet. OR IS IT? This is a very important question. Perhaps it would be more true to the facts to say that this is a place where the Christ and the Buddha dwell side by side, at a convenient and comfortable distance. It may be more accurate to say that Burma is not so much the MEETING place of the two faiths, as the place where both remain in comparative isolation and maintain a relatively peaceful co-existence. The question, then, of the "Encounter" in Burma really is a question!

I

It is first of all necessary to distinguish the type of Buddhism found in Burma from that of some other Asian countries, especially China and Japan. The Buddhism of Burma is called Theravada Buddhism, that is, the Buddhism which follows the way of the Elders. It is part of the Southern, or Conservative, school which also flourishes in Ceylon, Thailand and Cambodia. This distinguishes it from the tradition of Mahayana Buddhism which is also known as the Northern school. The word Mahayana means, "large vehicle," and implies a broad understanding of the Buddha's teaching which will lead to an incorporation of all mankind within the fold. But Theravada Buddhists look upon Mahayana forms as heresy and believe that they have strayed far from the teachings of the Enlightened One. The Mahayana Buddhists call the Theravada Buddhists, "Hinayana"; those of the small vehicle. Their conservative ways and understanding will carry only a small number across the stream of life. Theravada Buddhists repudiate the term "Hinayana" but acknowledge that theirs is the straight and narrow path, based solely on the teachings of the Lord Buddha as found in the Scriptures, the Pali Tripitaka.

Burmese Buddhists, then pride themselves on being true to the faith "once and for all delivered." They think of themselves as conservative, scriptual and missionary. This means that when

the Burmese Theravada Buddhist encounters a Burmese Baptist Christian it is the meeting of two pietistic versions of the two faiths. This also partly explains why a real encounter is so difficult. Syncretism is less of a temptation than sheer isolation. Both groups have a firm sense that their Lord is THE LORD; their scriptures are THE scriptures; their traditions are the ones to be followed and there is little desire to investigate and learn from, much less copy, the other.

II

The Buddhist "gospel" consists of a ruggedly realistic vision of this "vale of tears" and a well defined discipline which leads to freedom from the miseries of this world and the achievement of Nirvana. The heart of this message is enshrined in the Buddha's famous Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path.

The first is the noble truth of suffering (dukkha). The world is a scene of constant suffering or trouble for those who have the courage to look realistically and not through the rose-tinted glasses of optimistic illusion. Birth is suffering, decay is suffering and death is suffering. To be poor involves suffering; but to be rich involves even more subtle temptations. To be ignorant is a misery; but education produces its own perils. To be married means trouble but to remain single means perpetual dissatisfaction. No matter what the condition or stage of life all is impermanent and the whole is shot through with suffering.

The second noble truth describes the origin of suffering. Suffering is the result of insatiableness. Self assertion, craving, and greed permeate all of life as we know it. The third noble truth tells of the necessity for the extinction of suffering. Nothing less than the complete fading away of this insatiable self-assertoin will produce the desired end, the extinction of suffering. The achieving of this state is called Nirvana.

The fourth noble truth describes the path which leads to extinction of suffering. The Eightfold Path of discipline is a middle way between an unprofitable asceticism and a careless involvement in the world of impermanence. It consists of Right Understanding, Right Thought, Right Speech, Right Action, Right Livelihood, Right Effort, Right Mindfulness, Right Concentration. Thus, to tread the path to Nirvana successfully involves an intellectual grasp of the Dhamma (doctrine), a moderately ascetic morality and a degree of mystical contemplation.

Upon this framework is reared an impressive structure of thought and life. A two-story morality for monks and laymen provides a detailed scheme for the ordinary

life and the accumulating of merit which improves one's lot in future existences and moves one ever closer to Nirvana. Contemplation is a means not an end, but as such, includes a vast panorama of methods and techniques, many stemming from ancient Hindu Yogi practices.

But this is not all. In Burma, as in other Buddhist countries, this faith has amalgamated with the local "spirit worship" beliefs and customs, so that the formula for the Buddhism of Burma has been sometimes characterized as one part Buddhism and four parts "spirit worship." There is an old saying that the Burman loves the Buddha but fears the "nats" (spirits). Certainly the elements of awe, mystery, sacrifice and expiation spring more from the "spirit worship" heritage to which the austere ethical teachings of the Buddha frequently appear as a thin veneer. The presence of both the Buddha shrine and the spirit-altar in most Buddhist homes is testimony to the peaceful co-existence of these seemingly contradictory elements in the popular religion of the Burman Buddhist.

The last recorded words of the Buddha are characteristic of the basic attitude of Theravada Buddhism. "All the constituents of being are transitory; work out your salvation with diligence." (1) U Thittila, the Buddhist monk and Lecturer in Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Rangoon, describes the self-salvation of

A Buddhist Meditating

the Buddhist in the following terms: "All through the Buddha's teaching, repeated stress is laid on self-reliance and resolution. Buddhism makes man stand on his own feet, it arouses his self-confidence and energy. The Buddha again and again reminded his followers that there is no one, either in heaven or on earth, who can help them or free them from the result of their past evil deeds. 'It is through unshaken perseverance, O Monks, that I have reached the light, through unceasing effort that I have reached the peace supreme. If you, also O Monks, will strive unceasingly, you too

will within a short time reach the highest goal of holiness by understanding and realizing it yourselves.' Understanding that neither a god nor ceremonies can help or save him, the true Buddhist finds no place for prayer; he feels compelled to rely on his own efforts and thus gains self-confidence. He sees that the tendency to rely on a god or any other imaginary power weakens man's confidence in his own power and lessens his sense of responsibility; he sees that blind faith in any authority leads to stagnation and spiritual lethargy. The Buddhist reaches his goal through perserverance in meditation rather than through prayer." (2)

III

How, then, does the Christian Gospel appear to one nurtured in the Theravada tradition? The reaction is very likely to take one of two possible forms. The Buddhist may feel that in basic essentials the religions are the same and the differences are incidental. This is frequently expressed by saying that the Buddha is Lord for Asians while Jesus Christ is Lord to the Westerner. But both religions believe in doing good, both have valuable scriptures, worthy practices and are designed to produce good character.

But a more serious and discerning Buddhist may state the points at which he finds particular attraction or annoyance in the Christian message. The following are frequently the salient points.

1. The surety with which the Christian speaks of a personal God with whom he can have conscious fellowship leaves most Buddhists skeptical. The Buddhist may be a reverant agnostic or a more dogmatic atheist regarding the question of a personal God. Furthermore he has been taught to look upon the belief in man's "self", as an abiding center of consciousness, as evidence of the dillusion which clings to worldly man. Ultimately there is no little self and no great self. This is why Buddhism is frequently described as a religion without a God and without a soul. The Buddhist wonders, then, when he hears of an "I-Thou" encounter, prayer as response to an "Other," and salvation as a new relationship of the person to God and to other persons.

2. In a similar way, salvation as a quality of life or an experience to be realized in this existence will raise many questions in his mind. For him Nirvana is, at best remote. This accounts for the leisureliness with which he approaches religious matter—Nirvana will not be reached in this existence nor in the one immediately following. It is likely to be innumerable existences away. But by accumulating merit through good deeds one can help improve his lot for the future and move

himself closer to the extinction of suffering.

3. The exclusive claims of Jesus Christ presented as THE way, THE truth and THE life will appear to him as so much aggressive western dogmatism, now called cultural imperialism. This is the age-old scandal of the particular when confronting the universalism of the Oriental mind. That truth can be found in a variety of places in a variety of forms seems natural enough. But that God should choose to reveal himself especially to and through a particular people and finally at a particular time and place through a unique, historical person seems pathetically narrow.

4. The Christian belief in social service as a means of serving God will strike many modern young Burmans as a very attractive feature. In these days of the Welfare State and the need to enlist responsible individuals in social service projects the readiness of Christians who have been trained to think in these terms strike many Buddhists as a fine thing. There is a strong tendency to seek to drain off this emphasis without getting involved with the theology of incarnation or the philosophy of history which underlies it. The attempt now to erect a Welfare State upon a Buddhist base which has traditionally sought release from historical contingencies and upheld the ideal of the contemplative monk is one of the most interesting features of the present political and religious scene in Burma.

IV

It is when one looks at the figures representing the Burman Buddhist background Christians, that one realizes how slow has been the penetration of Christianity among the major group of the land. The Burma Baptist Churches Union includes the largest group of so called "Burman" Christians and it numbers about 5,000 members after roughly 140 years of activity. The usual figure given is that from the Burman Buddhist background people, one out of one thousand is a Christian. Actually this is a very generous estimate. The true picture is even more startling, probably one out of every fifteen hundred.

This breakdown helps to explain why the Burman Buddhist continues to feel that Christianity is not for him. One time in the home of a Buddhist friend a rustic visitor asked the host who I was. The reply was that I was a Christian "monk." To this the Buddhist asked, "What is a Christian?" Looking a bit embarrassed my genial host answered the rustic by saying that Christianity was the religion of Americans and Karens. This is the emotional equivalent of saying that it is the religion of the people on the

other side of the world, and those on the other side of the tracks!

U Ba Hmyin, the very able Yale-trained Secretary of the Burma Baptist Churches Union, thinks that "confrontation" or "encounter" may be poor words to describe what is or what will take place. He prefers to think that the potent seed of the Gospel has been planted in the life and culture of Buddhist Burma and that it cannot be eradicated. However small the seed may be its influence has already been felt and even the most exclusive Buddhist must take cognizance of this fact, especially when he considers the question of education for his own children. No one cares to dogmatize as to the future, but that the seed has already taken root and will continue to grow is the sure faith of many Burman Christians.

V

This leads to the important question as to where the Christian mission now stands with reference to encounter with Buddhism in Burma.

H. Kraemer has summed up the situation in the following words: "In regard to the contemporary non-Christian religions, the main remark to be made in this context is that for the first time since the Constantine victory in A. D. 312 and its consequences, the Christian Church is heading towards a real and spiritual encounter with the non-Christian religions. Not only because the so-called younger churches, the fruits of the work of modern missions, live in the midst of them, but also because the fast growing interdependence of the whole world forces the existence and vitality of these religions upon us, and makes them a challenge to the Church to manifest in new terms its spiritual and intellectual integrity and value." (6)

There are many reasons to feel that Burma will become the scene of a significant encounter between these two faiths.

VI.

If, instead of passing each other at a convenient distance as ships in the night, a genuine encounter is in the offing, what then are some of the challenges which each faith must meet? If both are drawn sufficiently out of their pietistic isolation to engage in genuine give-and-take it might well cause some serious modification of both faiths. It might also mean that both would be

enriched rather than either one driving the other from the field.

Buddhists might be forced to give the matter of the "I-Thou' symbolism a second thought. Instead of so quickly dismissing this as dillusion it might really be called to face the question of whether this analogy does really refer to a significant aspect of reality. The Christian belief that "there is mercy with the Lord" and that the ultimate ground of the universe is gracious and Redeeming and has been revealed historically in a Person MIGHT just contain some truth, and it may turn out to be significant. But to face up to this as a possibility worth examining would call for a genuine shedding of the conservative dogmatism which refuses to recognize any significant differences between Buddhism and Christianity. If something worth knowing is found outside of my books and traditions, then the pride which insists that I do not look is really a damning thing Spiritual pride is equally damning whether found in a Baptist Christian or a Theravada Buddhist.

Buddhists will also have to face the question of the kind and degree of adjustment of their ancient faith to the pressures of the modern world. The case of the traditional world-denying ascetic morality being an adequate base for a modern Welfare State has already been indicated. To be sure, taking a long look at India's religious development the contribution of the Buddha can be seen, as Schweitzer has pointed out, (7) to be in the direction of a modification of extreme asceticsm in the direction of world affirmation. The Founder, then, can rightly be appealed to as one who was capable of challenging and modifying a well established tradition in the light of new demands. Still, the conservatism of the Theravada tradition has resulted more in an attempt to preserve the teaching and customs of the Founder rather than maintaining his prophetic spirit in relation to changing conditions. The fact that the Religion of Science and Marxism are the live options for university students should also give pause to Buddhists who desire that the ancient faith appear relevant to a modern evolutionary society.

But the encounter, if genuine, should also give Christians ample reason for heart searching. The underlying assumption of Christians is that they have everything to give and nothing to receive. It may be well be that Christians have much to give but a failure to recognize the possible need for listening and learning as well as preaching and testifying, may indicate a paralyzing lack of openness and spiritual pride, as much as apostolic fervor. Christianity at its most catholic and missionary best has always been a

learning and listening faith as well as a proclaiming faith. Its ability to appreciate, baptize, use and conserve elements taken from the faiths it touches is one of the strongest elements in its claim to finality and uniqueness.

Burmese Christians, then, will be called upon to face squarely this particular variant of "The Oriental Mind" and will be challenged to see if they can learn as well as give. Even the consciousness of the impersonal may be found to be a valuable corrective against a sentimental and naive personalism, which does more to obscure than recommend the faith to Orientals. Baron F. von Hugel was convinced that the scientific method when appropriated by Christians could act as "purifying, enlarging, purgatorial waters" to deprovincialize the petty, selfish shouting Individual. This in turn would lead to a chastened more mature appreciation of the personal. (8) It may well be that the contact with the genuine, perhaps God-given insights of Oriental religion may be able to perform a similar function for Christians and lead them to a more robust personalism.

In a similar way Christians may be challenged to a new appreciation of the mystical element which is not completely alien to the Christian faith, but which is certainly under-developed in its Burma Baptist expression. In a country where a place for meditation is provided in every village and where techniques of meditation have been developed with the tenacity and exactness of a science, Christians do not seem to have developed the prayer-meditation aspect of Christian devotion with any intensity or originality. More like their American counterparts they are rich in Organization Men (Association Secretaries) and Salesmen (Evangelists). But Burmese Christians, if related to their Asian heritage, ought to be expected in the course of the years to produce those more skilled in prayer, contemplation, retreats and the life of disciplined devotion. A genuine encounter with Buddhism might lead to a deeper realization of this need, while growth in this area might actually help produce a better bridge from Christians to Buddhists.

NOTES.

1. Digha XVI, 14
2. Quoted in THE PATH OF THE BUDDHA, edited by K. Morgan, pp. 76, 77
6. Kraemer, pp. cit., p. 20
7. A. Schweitzer, INDIAN THOUGHT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT.
8. Baron F. von Hugel, THE MYSTICAL ELEMENT OF RELIGION, Vot. I, p. 41.

THE DHAMMAPADA

FAVOURITE BUDDHIST DEVOTIONAL BOOK

An Introduction by Paul D. Clasper

AMONG Buddhists, especially of the Theravada tradition, the favourite classic is the DHAMMAPADA, meaning. "The Way of Truth," or "The Path of Virtue." Through the centuries it has come to occupy a corresponding place in Buddhist life to that of the *Bhagavad-Gita* among Hindus and *The Imitation of Christ* among Christians. Thousands of Buddhists in all walks of life would echo the testimony of Bhikku Kassapa: "If I were to name any book from the whole Tipitaka as having been of most service to me, I should without hesitation choose the DHAMMAPADA. And it goes without saying that, to me, it is the best single book in all the wide world of literature. For forty years and more it has been my constant companion and never-failing solace in every kind of misfortune and grief. There is not a trouble that man is heir to, for which the Lord over sorrow cannot point out cause and prescribe sure remedy. One never turns in vain to these stanzas of incomparable beauty for advice, for alleviation of life's manifold pains, or for message of cheer and penetrating insight." (Note 1).

The DHAMMAPADA is found in the second basket, or group of discourses, in the Tipitaka known as the Sutta Pitaka. It is a book in itself consisting of twenty six chapters and subdivided into four hundred and twenty three verses, thus being roughly about half the size of the Gospel of John. It consists of words believed to be spoken by the Lord Buddha as counsel in specific situations. Most of these situations have been preserved and it is possible, by means of a commentary, to set the verses in their actual context. While scholars applying modern critical methods date the editing and some of the composing at a much later time

than tradition has set, no one seriously doubts that this is an authentic, perhaps the very best, expression of the Buddha's own philosophy as the sermon on the Mount does to Christian theology.

Lin Yutang has well said: "The DHAMMAPADA is a great spiritual testimony, one of the very few religious masterpieces in the world, combining genuineness of spiritual passion with a happy gift of literary expression. It is closer to the modern man than conceptions, is bound to strike deeper a Hindu than a non-Hindu mind, while the DHAMMAPADA speaks directly on common ethical terms, such as many a self-made man would like to present to his licentious-living son, but usually has not the courage to because he is his own father. The DHAMMAPADA therefore belongs to the world and to all time." (Note 2)

The language and metaphors of the DHAMMAPADA are direct and concrete. The analogies, again like the Sermon on the Mount, are taken from everyday life and are easily grasped.

377. As the jasmine creeper sheds its withered flowers, even so, O bikkhus, (monks) should you totally cast off lust and hatred.

382. The bikkhu who, while still young, devotes himself to the Buddha's teaching illumines this word like the moon freed from a cloud.

85. Few are there amongst men who go to the Further Shore; the rest of this mankind only run along the bank.

Life is seen as full of snares, constantly luring man into the slavery of world-attachment.

251. There is no fire like lust, no grip like hate; there is no net like delusion, no river like craving.

287. The doting man with mind set on children and herds death seizes and carries away, as a great flood a slumbering village.

The DHAMMAPADA then is a clarion call to heedfulness or alertness, coupled with the injunction to root out evil by vigorous self-effort.

337. This I say to you, Good luck to you all who have assembled here; dig up the root of craving, as one in quest of birana's sweet root. Let not Mara (the tempter) crush you again and again, as the flood a reed.

327. Take delight in heedfulness; guard your mind well. Draw yourself out of the evil way like an elephant sunk in the mire.

In this process of lifting oneself it is an illusion to think of depending on others. Only self can perform this. But the self can be illumined by the teaching of the Buddha's way.

160. The self is lord of the self; for what other lord would there be? For with self well controlled one obtains a lord difficult to gain.

161. By one's self alone is evil done; it is self-born, it is self-caused; evil grinds the unwise as a diamond a hard gem.

276. You yourselves must make an effort; the Tathagathas, (Buddhas) are only teachers. The meditative ones who enter the way are delivered from the bonds of Mana. (pride).

274. This is the only Way, there is none other for the purity of vision; do you follow this Path. This is the bewilderment of Mana.

236. Make an island unto yourself; strive quickly: become wise; pured of stain and passionless, you shall enter the heavenly stage of the Ariyas.

Throughout, the ascetic ideal of world-withdrawal and meditation is held up as the way to achieve this conquest of the self with its passions and evil.

330. Better it is to live alone. There is no fellowship with a fool; let one live doing no evil, being care-free, like an elephant in the elephant forest.

373. The bhikku who has retired to a lonely abode, who has calmed his mind, who clearly perceives the Doctrine, experiences a joy transcending that of men.

371 Meditate, O bhikkhu ! Be not heedless. Do not let your mind whirl on sensual pleasures. Do not be careless and swallow a lead-ball.

372. There is no concentration to one who lacks wisdom, nor is there wisdom to him who lacks concentration. In whom are both concentration and wisdom, he, indeed, is in the presence ot Nibbana. (highest attainment.)

But it is easy to fool oneself when occupied with ascetic exercises. Some of the finest passages are the warnings against the hypocrisy of those engaged in the mortification of the flesh.

307. Many on whose neck is the yellow robe are of evil disposition and uncontrolled; evil ones by their evil deeds are born in hell.

308. Better to eat an iron ball red-hot, like a flame of fire, than as an immoral, uncontrolled person to eat the alms of people.

311. What is the use of your matted hair, O witless man ! What is the use of your antelope garment ? Within you are full of passions but without you are highly ornamented.

But when the Path is followed with resolution the result will be the tranquility of Nibbana.

414. He who has passed beyond this quagmire, this difficult path the ocean of life (samsara), and delusion, who is meditative, free from craving and doubts, who clinging to naught, has attained Nibbana, him I call a brahmana. (one who has entered the higher stage toward Nibbana).

418. He who has given up likes and dislikes, who is cooled and is without substrata, who has conquered the world, and is strenuous, him I call a brahmana.

NOTE

For those desiring a further acquaintance with the DHAMMAPADA the following editions are readily available and will be found helpful.

1. The DHAMMAPADA translated by Narada Thera Wisdom of the East Series, John Murray, London. A good translation by a monk from Ceylon with a valuable introduction and notes Brief and readable.
2. THE WISDOM OF CHINA AND INDIA, edited by Lin Yutang, in various editions. Complete and most inexpensive in The Modern Library edition, New York. Includes the famous Max Muller translation of best collections of scriptures, proverbs and legends giving the popular reader the spirit of Eastern thought.
3. THE DHAMMAPADA, Oxford U. Press, London. The Pali text, English translation, introduction and notes by India's most famous contemporary philosopher, Vice President S. Radhakrishnan.
4. THE DHAMMAPADA. Burmese translation for K 1/- at the Hanthawady Press, Sparks Street, Rangoon, Burma.

THE BUDDHIST SCRIPTURES

They are called the Tripitaka—
(The Three Baskets) Composed of :—

Vinaya Pitaka—"The Basket of Discipline" consists of five books which expound the rules of monastic life.

Sutta Pitaka—"The Basket of Discourses" discussions, stories, poems and proverbs, imparting the teachings of Buddhism.

Adhidhamma Pitaka—The Basket of Ultimate Things" deals with deeply philosophical and psychological aspects of Buddhism.

The Buddhist Scriptures have been translated into English by the Pali Text Society in London. Their edition totals approximately 50 volumes in size.

A CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY

by U Lay Maung

I was born of Buddhist parents. My father lived and died a strong Buddhist. I was born in Moulmein and at about the age of 12 years I was sent to a Christian Mission School. As I went on with the years in the school, it so happened that I began to consider something about the meaning of my little life in the world. I know I have life in me. What is it for? What is the purpose for which I have come into the world? I did not bring my life of my own accord. I only know that life has been given me. What for? These are the questions that presented themselves to me again and again as I lived on through the years. What is the meaning of life? To live? or to commit suicide? The impulse within me says that it is to live. In me also there is the "Will to Live." Implicit in the "Will to Live," says Streeter, "is the unexpressed assumption that it is worthwhile.". And so I considered human life as having a meaning in it, as having some purpose lying behind it. If I am to live at all, I must live my life meaningfully. But how am I to make my life worthwhile? That is another question again. And so I looked around whether among the religions I could find a way of life which would make my life meaningful.

First of all I appealed to Buddhism. But Buddhism interpreted life as "maya", an illusion. It is meaningless. Existence is an evil. Buddhism provides only a way of escape from the world of life. Then I approached Hinduism for Enlightenment. But Hinduism said almost the same thing. I went to Mohamedanism also, whose Deity I found too transcendent and aloof to be interested in human affairs. Man must bow to the law of necessity. His life hangs on the whims of fatalism. It hardly provides a way of life which is worthwhile. Man is resigned to his fate.

Lastly, I came to Christianity. Here I found Jesus who said "Follow me. I am the way, the truth and the life. I am come that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." Now this is a very daring statement. Of all the founders of religions, Jesus is the only one who declares this. He says, "I am the way of life, nay, I am myself the Life." No statement can be bolder than this. If it be not true, Jesus must be a liar or a fool.

U Lay Maung, formerly a school headmaster, was for 17 years, Deputy In pector of Schools for Mandalay.

Anyway, as He is the only person who professes to be the way of life, I boldly ventured to try my faith in Him, and follow His and verify Him by my own experience of Him. In the Gospels of the New Testament I followed Him and there I found Him to be a friend of publicans and sinners. His human kindliness brought Him into contact with lepers, the sick, the blind and the lame. He was also kind and tender to those who were down and out. He lived and moved and had His being among all sorts and conditions of men doing good to all. In their afflictions He was afflicted also. He did not solve the problem of human suffering, nor provide a way of escape. When suffering itself came He accepted it and laid down His life. He used suffering as a means to serve His higher purpose. He gave no moral code. He gave His life.

And this life I have found by experience to be worthwhile and meaningful.

The history of Christian centuries also serves to show how men and women who followed Him had their own lives changed and transformed into His likeness because of the life they found in Him. In the early Christian Church we see St. Paul who persecuted the Christians, because he hated Christianity. After his conversion we see how he slaved for Christ in the cause of the Gospel. Again we come to Father Damien who lived a life of service among lepers, himself becoming a leper after all. Judson and his wife also came to Burma. He preached Christ. He lived a life of service among the Burmans. He was imprisoned. He suffered and his wife also. Yet he believed his life worthwhile here in Burma because he felt Christ within him. And now these are only a few historical instances of the evidence afforded by Christian centuries, to prove that Jesus Christ is not only the way of Life. He is Life Himself.

My own experience of Him ever since the last 51 years of my life as a Christian has proved that by Him and through Him only, I could make my life worthwhile and meaningful here on this earth. I am confident that my humble faith in Him will find me safely home into my Heavenly Father's Eternal Fellowship.

THE MEANING OF BUDDHISM

Synopsis of an article by the same title by U Thittila written for the Atlantic Monthly Supplement "Perspective of Burma" 1958.

Dhamma

U THITTILA, born in 1886, and lecturer in Buddhist Philosophy at the University of Rangoon is recognized as Burma's outstanding interpreter of Buddhism to the West. In this article, U Thittila declares that all the teachings of the Buddha can be summed up in one word: *Dhamma.* Dhamma means truth—that which really is. It also means law, the law which exists in a man's own heart and mind. The Dhamma is the principle of the righteousness. Therefore Buddha's appeal to man was to live according to the laws of life, not to please any deity, but to be true to the laws of his own being. The Dhamma is not only the law of man's life, but it is the law which governs the world of nature around us.

Buddhism is then, not a religion at all, as we think of other religions. It has no deity, nor has it a system of faith or worship. There is no place for prayer in a sense of appealing to a deity. Man must rely on himself. Buddha taught that we should believe "only that which is true in the light of our own experience, that which conforms to reason and is conducive to the highest good and welfare of all human beings." Buddha has pointed out the path, but he cannot walk it for us, each man must do it for himself.

Dependent Origin

The truth that a Buddhist sees when he looks around is the truth of cause and effect. He sees that every action, no matter how insignificant, produces an effect. And every effect becomes in turn a cause and produces other effects. The principle involved here is called Dependent Origination. There is no possibility of conceiving of a First Cause. Cause and effect operate in a kind of cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

Khandas

There is no such thing as soul. Buddha used the metaphor of a cart to explain this. If you take away the wheels, axles, floorboards, side and other parts of a cart, then there is no more cart. So is the human being. Man is defined as "the uninterrupted process of psychophysical phenomena." He is composed of 5 elements called khandas.* In death these 5 elements separate and immediately recombine to form a new being. So there is no intermediate stage between death and another life.

Karma

The force which governs all change is called in Pali "Kamma" in Sanscrit "Karma". Kamma means action. It refers to intentional actions, mental, physical, or verbal. The doctrine of Kamma says that every good deed brings a good effect and every bad deed brings a bad effect. This is a completely impersonal force, it is not seeking to punish or reward, it is merely the effect of deeds coming back upon us. And the kammaic effect of a deed may come immediately upon us, or at some later time in life, or in the next existence. U Thittila emphazes that Kamma is not fatalism or determinism. He says that the past influences the present, but does not dominate it. The past is the background for the present, but it need not be a hinderance to man's right actions in the present. Thus man himself is responsible for his own happiness. He has free will and although he may be suffering the effects of previous misdeeds, he can through good deeds build up good kamma for his future. For every good deed we do increases the goodness within us and also brings its fruits in goodness flowing back to us.

Rebirth

Turning to rebirth, U Thittila says that the principle of dependent origin and the kammic force gives us a background for understanding rebirth. In death the kammic force of the old being give rise to the new being, and our physical forms are only the outward manifestations of the kammic force.

Nibbana

The "wheel of life" or round of existences is full of pain and misery and the reason that we continue on this round is that we hold on to life and are filled with desires. Nibbana, or in Sanscrit, Nirvana, is the highest state of bliss to which the Buddhist aspires. This state is achieved when one gets rid of desire. Through Buddhist meditation and concentration, the memory can be trained, and one can acquire the power to look back into one's previous lives. When one is truly enlightened to see the emptiness of the chain of existence and his clinging to desire, then he enters the state of enlightenment or Nibbana in this life. And having attained this, he reaches the end of the chain of rebirths. Nirvana in Sanscript means the "blowing out" and indicates the extinguishment of the flame of personal desire and the quenching of the flame of life. Very often Western thought has conceived of Nirvana as nothingness, a negative state. But to the Buddhist it is always described in positive terms as the highest attainment.

At the root of man's trouble is ignorance. Ignorance of the truth

gives rise to desire and with it the whole cycle of existence. So the way to Nirvana is through knowledge, and thus the Dhamma become all important, for the Dhamma, or truth, is the means of release from ignorance, and desire, and perpetual chance, "and the Buddha has shown us the way to truth."

U Thittila closes his article by saying that although Buddhism is not a religion, it is one of the greatest systematic exercises in spirituality ever conceived. For the ordinary man Buddhism stresses a life of self-reliance and resolution, for Buddha makes each man stand on his own feet. Although Nirvana is not thought of in a moral sense as being a place of reward, yet the path toward Nirvana is a moral path. The doctrine of Kamma receives its highest expression in "metta", which means universal and all embrasing love. This is an active benevolence and it goes out to extend sympathy and aid to all beings, regardless of caste, color, class or sex. This "metta" U Thittila makes as the basis of social welfare and social progress

(*the five khandas are corporality, feeling, perception, mental formations, consciousness.)

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The *Thilas* are the five precepts that the Buddhist layman is taught to observe. They are as follows :

To abstain from 1—destroying life
2—stealing
3—adultery
4—lying
5—drinking intoxicants.

An additional five must be practiced by monk novices :

To abstain from 6—eating at forbidden times.
7—seeing dancing.
8—using garlands, scents, ungents.
9—sleeping on high or broad beds.
10—using gold or silver.

For the fully ordained clergy, there are 227 rules which they are bound to observe.

BUDDHIST REVIVAL IN BURMA

by Russell E. Brown

IN the aftermath of war and insurrection, there has been a widely publicized revival of Buddhism in Burma as well as in other Buddhist countries. This revival has expressed itself in a number of ways. Outstanding has been the erection of the World Peace Pagoda outside Rangoon and the holding of the Sixth Buddhist World Council, which involved a tremendous outlay of money and a great deal of free toil and labor. There is the Buddhist World Mission which is responsible for the publishing of numerous tracts and sending out of Buddhist missionaries to the remote areas of Burma and to some other countries. There is the printing of the Buddhist Scriptures in the common Burmese tongue and the establishing of Pali Universities. The Ford Foundation has assisted in making possible a large Buddhist library. Examinations in the Buddhist Scriptures are being held in community centres and prisons as part of a program of religious instruction. Young Men's and Young Women's Buddhist Associations have been formed. Religious festivals and exhibitions are being fostered in addition to the usual dramatic enactments of incidents from Buddha's life. And preaching services are being held in various neighborhood centers.

Certainly it is too early to say how deep-rooted and lasting this revival will be. One reason for a strong emphasis on Buddhism has probably been the need to foster a high ethical and moral endeavor among people who had been uprooted during the war, to unite them in a common religion, and to offset the pull toward irreligious Communism. Also there has been expressed the feeling that under colonial rule the authority of the clergy was so proscribed that religion went into a state of decline, and so only with Independence are the clergy able to restore religion to its full flower.

It is to be hoped that the demands of the present world situation will call forth new insights on the part of Buddhist leaders, as they seek to relate their religion to needs around them. It is interesting that there is a group of monks who are part of the MRA (Moral Re-Armament)

group, for on the whole the M.R.A. idealogy presupposes a God from whom the follower receives guidance through meditation.

It is also interesting that the former Prime Minister U Nu, in a speech recorded in "The Nation" newspaper in 1958, speaking about the need for social welfare programs, indicated that poverty and ill health are not to be regarded as the just effects of bad kamma, but are to be considered as unfortunate conditions in the world which we should try to remedy. U Thittila indicates (see article on "The Meaning of Buddhism" that "metta" is the principle of universal love and goodwill which should be fostered. This is made the basis of Buddhist concern for a Welfare State. However, it should be noted that in the strict Scriptural sense "metta" was one of the virtues that applied in the ordinary state of the householder; and when one sought the higher states toward Nibbana, he would leave behind this concern for the world as he sought a detached state of mind through meditation. So for this group that seek the highest in religion, the direction is not into the world, but detachment from the world.

Perhaps this is one of the problems to be grappled with. There is a need for a strong motivation to lead young men and women into careers of teaching, nursing and social service. In Christianity such service is identified with the highest that we see in Christ, and any service that we may render to others is always seen as falling far short of Christ who laid down His life for the world. In Buddhism the unselfish principle is found in "metta" but this quality is not upheld in the Scriptures as being the highest attainment.

An interesting development along the line of spiritual attainment is the Buddhist Meditation Center in Rangoon where not only Buddhists but visitors from other lands and religions have come to experience Buddhist meditation. Here through the yogi practice of meditation, peace through detachment is the goal that is sought.

Christian Leaders Study Buddhism

Christians have been eager to follow the development in the Buddhist revival, and there has been a real attempt on the part of Christian leaders to understand Buddhism more and to come into more intimate contact with Buddhist thinking.

Several items along this line might be noted: One is the sponsoring by the Burma Christian Council of several series of lectures interpreting Buddhism to missionaries and other interested people. This has been followed by a Commission on Buddhism established by the B. C.C. composed mainly of national leaders seeking to understand and follow more closely developments in Buddhist thought and the relation of the Christian to his Buddhist neighbors.

Then there is the project, still in the planning stage, for the establishment of a Center of Buddhist Studies. At present this is being fostered by the Baptist group with hopes that such a center can be established on the grounds of our Seminaries at Insein, with facilities for research and publication, as well as giving some back-ground instruction and understanding to our seminary students.

Miss Mary Ellen Williams, who has been a semi-permanent resident at the Guest House during the period of her initial language study, went to Thonze at the beginning of March for several months of further study in Burmese.

Miss Emilie Ballard, missionary nurse of Yedwinyegan, has settled down at the Guest House for about six months while she carries on special language textbook revision work to which she has been assigned by the Convention Executive Committee. Duties at Yedwinyegan make "commuting" back there occasionally necessary for her.

GRADUATION SERVICE

of the Karen Women's Bible School and the Karen Theological Seminary

by Marion Beebe

THE Graduating Exercises of the Seminary Schools which were held on the afternoon of the 28th of January were the culmination of a busy two weeks of final meetings of the Temperance Society, the Prayer Bands, and other organizations. The Senior Class spent their Sundays at Karen Churches nearby conducting all the services. There were farewell social functions, refresher course for Alumni, and a big Pre-graduation concert on the night of the 27th out of doors so that everyone could come.

In addition to the usual songs and skits, the serious numbers were four very dramatic scenes from the Life of Paul and a dramatization called "From Darkness to Light" which gave a good picture of the marriage customs and funeral practices in a non-Christian village.

The Graduation Exercises begin at 2.30, but at 12.00 o'clock we could see the crowds beginning to gather, and by the time the first bell rang there was not an inch of space left except on the platform and where seats were reserved for the graduates. Some were sitting outside. We are glad to think that the new Centennial Chapel will be ready for our next graduation. Contributions taken at the Baccalaureate Service, at the Concert and at the Graduation exercises amounted to over K 1300.00 and will help in the completion of this building which commemorates over a hundred years of Seminary graduations.

This year there were twenty-three young women and thirty-five young men who received their diplomas or certificates. Fourteen of the men and three of the women were special students-taking a one or two-year course instead of the four year course for men and the three year course for women.

The three highest students in the Seminary gave addresses, but the whole class of the Bible School presented a brief pageant of Women as Pillars of the Church through the Centuries based on one of Margaret Applegarth's services.

The student who stood highest in the Seminary was Saw Rawlinson Pan whose grandfather was for many years the President of the Burma Christian Endeavour Society. We understand that Saw Rawlinson plans to go into Christian Endeavour work in the Rangoon area.

These graduates will now begin their work in many different areas of Burma. For some of them, as for instance those of Kayah, the Toungoo Hills and Tavoy and Moulmein, they will be returning to their own areas. Others are choosing to go to the more needy areas. They need your prayers.

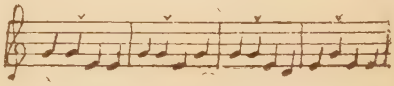
Although more than 90% of the people in Burma are Buddhists, many hill peoples revere the ancient beliefs of animism as described in

"MEET AN ANIMIST PRIEST"

by Russell Brown

UP in the Asho Chin land of Thayetmyo, in Burma, we were attending the graduation of the Asho Chin Bible School and the Pastor's Conference. One day, U Po Aung, who had driven up with us from Rangoon, said "Come on, I want to have you meet a man who was formerly an Asho Chin Animist Priest. He was converted ten years ago." U Po Aung, a retired inspector of schools, and an Asho Chin himself, planned to take us to visit the former priest by night so that we could hear the chanting of the scriptures. He said that evening was the usual time when they recited. He wasn't able to arrange the night meeting however, and so we met one morning, which made it easier for me to get a picture of U Po Aung talking with the priest. They conversed in Chin. Any questions I wanted to ask directly, I had to ask in Burmese. But U Po Aung translated the story as told to him, into English for us.

First the priest, whose name was U Mahn, chanted some of the scriptures. These sacred verses are not written down anywhere but are transmitted from priest to priest, learned by memory. The chanting seemed to be moving up and down in thirds on the scale, somewhat as I have indicated here :



Then U Mahn told us that he was chanting the Creation Story as given in the Animist Scriptures. And he proceeded to tell us the creation story in simple terms. This is the story as near as we could get it, with some comparisons with the accounts of other learned Chins.

In time beyond the reach of memory, there was a celestial abode. There came into existance here a divine being named "Ku." He prospered here for some time and his offspring multiplied in number. One day Ku made a bull sacrifice and during the performance of the rite, he did something wrong and consequently he, with the whole of his family and all of his offspring, died suddenly. Thus Ku, the first being in the celestial abode, came to an end.

Ku was followed by "Chien",

Note :—I am deeply indebted to U Po Aung who made this interview possible, and also to Samo Hla U, Headmaster of the State High School, Aunglanmyo, who gave many helpful additions and revisions to the creation story.

R.E.B.

"Yin", and "Aw". One after another they all met with the same fate as Ku.

At last came "Hlee" and somehow or other he was transformed into a supernatural being with the power of creation. First he created a heavenly abode and lived there. But he left the celestial abode, and since then nothing has been known of this abode. The heavenly land of Hlee was a land of great beauty with trees, plants and animals of all descriptions.

Some time later Hlee laid four eggs. Out of the first came the Indian. The Burman was hatched out of the second. The third was slow in hatching, but finally out of it came the Chin. The Chin boy that came out of the egg was defective. So King Crow took him and treated and healed him. The fourth egg was supposed to be bad and was thrown away, but eventually it hatched among the rubbish and out came "Aw", the evil one.

Hlee at last wanted man to live in a separate world. So according to his express instructions, two attendants, Soo and Hway, sucked up the earth into being. It was at first barren, naked and lifeless. But later Soo and Hway filled it with all kinds of trees and plants, making the world fit for habitation. Now the earth was ready for human life, but Hlee issued an order that no one, man or animal, must go down to the earth without his permission and without paying due wages to Soo and Hway for the labour of creating the earth and filling it with vegetation.

Some animals, however, went down to the earth without the permission of Hlee and without paying due wages to Soo and Hway. As a punishment for their disobedience and foolery the barking deer has thin legs, the pheasant a red face, the squirrel a pointed nose, and the pig a turned-up nose, etc.

At a proper time Hlee let the Indian, the Burman and the Chin go down to earth for permanent habitation. Hlee was good enough to give the Chin an inheritance of an elephant and the Burman a goat. The Indian got nothing and he went to the west, while the Burman and the Chin went down to the south together. After some time they came to a river which lay right across their way. How to cross the river was a great problem. While trying to devise a means of crossing the river, they saw the goat bleating loudly "Baa, baa," and the elephant waving his trunk in the air. The Burman, the elder and cleverer, said to the Chin, "My brother, my goat is very anxious to cross the river while your elephant seems to be afraid. If you exchange your elephant with my goat, you will do better!" The simple Chin believed and made the exchange. At night the Burman crossed the river on the elephant. But the poor Chin

could not cross it on a goat and in disappointment, he turned to the west and came to the hills. This is the reason why the Chins inhabit the hills.

The Chin animists have some notion of sin, but their code of morality is very simple. Hlee, the creator and good power is active. But also Aw, the evil, is active. But Aw is Hlee's creation, so Hlee has power over evil spirits. The offering of a bull is made once a year by the village. They ask the bull to carry away their sicknesses. Then everyone touches the bull. It is then tied down and killed. Everyone eats the flesh. This is a sacrifice for health.

If a person has a headache, they believe an evil spirit is causing it. A sacrifice of a fowl is made to the evil spirit. Before making the offering, they ask the earth not to shake, as the slightest disturbance would spoil the sacrifice.

Aw is the evil power that brings all evil to man. With the sacrifice, Aw will carry away the disease. In illness Aw takes the spirit of the person to the place of death. When sacrifices are made, Aw calls back the spirit to life.

Animist Chins believe in life after death. When one dies his ghost has to go to an abode called "Mong Sing". The king of the abode is to be the judge who will decide whether one should go to hell, heaven, or earth. or stay in the land of Mong Sing. The first question Mong Sing will ask anyone is "Did you abuse your parents while on earth?" The second question is "Did you spit at others?" and so on. According to his answers, confirmed by his ring finger, which will act as a witness, the man will be judged. This shows that the Chins try to maintain a sort of good moral relations between parents and their children and good social relations with each other.

When we asked about how U Mahn became a Christian, he said it was through his younger brother. His brother had been converted and decided to prepare for the ministry. When he graduated from Seminary he came and preached the Gospel to U Mahn. This old priest said that from his youth he had been studying about Hlee. Now when his younger brother came and told him about God, he found that this was what he had been looking for all his life.

This is the wonderful thing: that Christianity comes to answer the deep searchings of human hearts. As we proclaim the Gospel to the far corners of the world, we bring answers that the human heart everywhere has been searching for. There are great hardships for those who seek to evangelize their non-Christian fellow men—but there is also this great compensation—when you find those who in Christ find the answer to the deep longings of the human heart.

THE FACE OF THINGS

by Russell E. Brown

THE landscape of Rangoon is looking different these days. Since General Ne win stepped nto the position of Prime Minister, we have been seeing cleaner cities in our land. Government workers have spent Sunday mornings working in streets and roadsides to clear out litter and underbrush. Curbstones have been whitewashed, roadside stalls removed, and anyone found leaving refuse or litter around is fined. Even the chewing of beetle nut and spitting the dark juice has been restrained in public places. The bus schedules have been greatly improved and overcrowding of buses eliminated.

One of the great improvements in this overcrowded city of Rangoon is the systematic removal of the Quethits, which are little refugee encampments of bamboo huts that have crowded back to back on tiny plots of land, causing great fire and sanitation hazard. People who thronged for safety to the land surrounding the great Shwe Dagon Pagoda during the war, now have been moved out, and a whole city called "Okkalapa" is springing up outside Rangoon proper. This new surburban development has been carefully plotted out. Each household receives a plot of land 40x60 feet, free, and the thirty year lease states that the family may not sell the land, but must live on it themselves. Thus profiteering in land is abolished.

The municipality is giving suggestions on the kind of house to be built, and minimum requirements for building are given. The cheapest house that can be built will cost about K. 300.00, which will be within reach of most families.

When we went out to visit Okkalapa one morning recently we were impressed with the signs of intense activity and industry. We drove into the area by a very dusty road in process of being built. Suddenly we were in the midst of this bustling activity of staking out plots and building houses—with the lumber yards unloading lumber, the mat weavers making mat walls a mile a minute, and new truckloads of settlers arriving in a steady stream, riding in trucks, perched up on top of their possessions. Street lights and water were in and the roadways had been laid out. Very fine looking homes were going up. People seemed to be taking pride in the fact that they were building their own homes, and the homes had individuality about them. It was nothing like the long barracks type of buildings that had been built in previous years to house fire victims. In the headquarters building we saw the

plot map of the entire area. This new town is developed into blocks, each block called by a particular "Yeit-tha" name. And in each main area there was to be located a clinic, a playground and a large school. We are told that 500 monasteries are being moved out of Rangoon. There was no indication on the plot map of any monastery land. Possibly the monasteries will be located outside these housing areas, for according to the Vinaya rules of the Buddhist Scriptures, monasteries are supposed to be located outside villages or centers where laymen are dwelling.

We were very interested as we took another road out of Okkalapa to find that this road led immediately into Kanbe and so puts our Kanbe Baptist Church just about a half mile from this tremendous center of new development. We certainly hope that this will give us new chances for Christian outreach from our Kanbe Christian Church.

We hope to get some land near Okkalapa where we might open Christian social center work. Rev. Harold Schock is working with leaders of the Burma Baptist Convention on this matter.

It is a great challenge to us to find our way in among these rapidly growing new centers of people, in order that where people are, new spiritual centers may be growing also.

A RAY OF PROMISE

THIS afternoon I was thinking very seriously whether I should really be doing this Christian Center work. Is it honestly worth while, I thought. Am I accomplishing anything? As I was tidying up the Center, the children were on the mats on the floor playing at various games. Some teenagers were playing ping-pong, others practicing their typing lessons. Is this a worthwhile way to spend my time? Am I spending God's mission money in the right way? Is the message of Christ really getting in the hearts of any of these young people?

Then about 8:00 tonight when I had closed the Center and was about to return home, some boys dropped their holiday firecrackers, candles and sparklers so they could ride with me to the main street—about 300 yards distance. At the end of the road just before they got out of the car one boy said, "Bogyi, I pray for you every night. I pray that God will be with you." All the others admitted they prayed for me too. I could truthfully tell them that I pray for them too. The boys waved as I turned on to the main street, and I felt in my heart a ray of promise. Maybe this Christian Center is accomplishing something for the Lord after all. All of those boys are Buddhists today; I have an influence on what they will be tomorrow.

—*Harold Schock*

METHODIST-BAPTIST UNION

by Bertha Dickason

SOME people would have said that the fact that the gardenias waited to bloom until the very day of the wedding and that the usual hot weather of February delayed until after the wedding, was an omen of something good for the happy couple. We said, " How perfect ! " as we looked upon the wedding of Miss Eleanor Smith, missionary nurse of Moulmein Christian Hospital, and the Reverend Robert C. Howard, Methodist missionary of Syriam district, Burma, on February 12th at 11 a. m. in the Burmese Baptist Church in Moulmein. It was Union Day for the Nation also, a happy coincidence as people were free of their work and could attend the wedding. Eleanor was brought up in Burma, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mark Smith of Pyinmana. Her mother, Mrs. Edna Smith, lives in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, U.S.A. Bob, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Alex T. Howard of Mobile, Alabama, is now in his second term of service in Burma.

The Rev. Frank Manton performed the ceremony while U Ba Hlaing, pastor of the Moulmein Burmese Baptist Church, assisted in the double ring ceremony. Dr. and Mrs. F. G. Dickason acted in the place of the bride's parents, Dr. Dickason giving the bride in marriage.

Wedding music was provided by Reverend Clayborne Erickson assisted at the piano by Sayama Daw Ruth. Mr. Erickson sang "Immortal Love Forever Full" by Whittier and while the bridal couple knelt for prayer, "The Lord's Prayer" by Mallott. A beautiful group of nurses well known to the bride, sang "O Perfect Love," led by Sayama Daw Thein Thein. All of them were dressed in pastel longyis (long skirts), white aingyis (blouses), and pastel net scarves.

The church was decorated by the Morton Lane teachers, chief among whom were Daw Nyein May and Daw Ngwe Thee. Ferns and Phaius orchids were banked at the sides of the altar. Lavender petunias graced the lectern, white Eucharist lilies the baptistry, and curious black Taccalaevis lilies the piano.

The bride's floor length gown was of rose pattern white lace in princess design with long sleeves coming to a point on the hand and fastened at the wrist with three small Burma pearls. Her single strand choker and earrings were also of Burma pearls. Her short nylon veil was embroidered at the top with seed pearls. Radiant as she was, she made a lovely picture which friends present from all groups in Moulmein will long remember. The bride's bouquet was centered with gardenias surrounded by palest pink roses falling from which were sprays of lilac and pale yellow dendrobium orchids.

The matron of honor, Mrs. Clayborne Erickson, wore a ballerina length dress of rose pattern white lace over apple green also in princess style with short sleeves. She carried a bouquet of deep pink roses with white orchids.

The best man was Thra Ah Maung, principal of Pegu Karen High School, Rangoon. He was formerly associated with Reverend Howard when both taught in United Christian High School, Rangoon, a school operated by the Methodist and Baptist churches in Rangoon.

A reception for one hundred and fifty guests was held following the ceremony in the church community hall nearby, which had been decorated with many kinds of garden flowers. A number of friends in Moulmein had sent their most beautiful flowers to add to those from Dr. Amah's garden at the hospital, all of which were greatly appreciated. Major Donney, business manager of the hospital, and his wife supplied the refreshments. Miss Ruth Keyser took charge of the guest book while the aides at this festive occasion were a number of Karen girls from Daing-wunkwin High School. Dressed in their colorful Karen costume, they helped in the

serving of wedding cake and punch. After a toast to the bride and groom, given in Burmese by U Ba Hlaing and proposed by Reverend Manton, the guests responded and Reverend Howard replied in English with many hearty words of appreciation for all that friends there had done to make this a perfect occasion. The bride then threw her bouquet to the waiting group of girls and it was caught by a Burmese girl. Rice began to rain on the couple as they turned toward their car which had been well decorated by the American young people present. There were pink and white crepe paper bows all over it and a sign "Just Married."

But to go back a bit, recall that this wedding was taking away a dearly loved member of the staff of the Hospital. So as the bride's car descended the hill on the way to the ceremony, every ambulatory patient and every nurse who could, was at the window or on the veranda of the hospital waving to the bride, and she returned the salute. After the reception, the bride and groom went immediately to the t.b. ward where patients stay for months and so come to know the staff of the hospital well. You might have called it a second reception for they had special music and there was joy written on every face. No king and queen could have received their guests with more graciousness than Eleanor and Bob did.

Then the new Mr. and Mrs. Howard left for Amherst-on-the-sea to spend a few days, later taking the schooner, S.S. Petaling, to Rangoon from Moulmein to take up their residence at Syriam. For going away, the bride wore a dress of pale blue eyelet embroidery made by Dr. Bina Sawyer as a gift to the bride.

And so as Eleanor and Bob begin their life together in the Methodist church of Syriam district, we pray that rich blessing may be theirs. We shall miss Eleanor in the ranks of the Baptist workers in Burma but we shall see her often. We see too that these two denominations which work closely together in Burma will in this way be still further united in the work of the Lord.

Out of town guests for the wedding and reception included Rev. and Mrs. Frank Manton and their sons David and William, Miss Jill Logie, Miss Rhoda Linton, Miss Martha Farnham, Mr. Bob Fuller, Mrs. Ray Beaver, Mrs. Lloyd James, Mrs. Russell Brown, and Dr. and Mrs. F. G. Dickason all of Rangoon.

On February 28th at 4 p.m. a reception for Rangoon friends to meet the Howards was arranged by Baptist missionaries in Rangoon in the garden of the Russell Browns' home. About 125 attended.

NEW CHURCH BUILDING DEDICATED

by Louise Paw

THEY came from near and far, from remote places several days' journey away, trudging the thick jungle paths and braving the risks that are still there today, so that they might participate in the dedication of the Church built to the memory of one whom they had loved and who loved them—these Karens of Tavoy, beloved children of Mama Sutton!

The church, a neat white concrete building designed by one of the sons of Tavoy, could seat only about four hundred, so the dedication service was held twice so that all who came could have a share in it. Dr. F. G. Dickason, a senior missionary in the field, opened the church door and offered up a prayer at the head of the steps. Then the procession, led by the choir and members of the Sutton family moved reverently into the church. Dr. Paul Clasper gave the dedication sermon in Burmese, Rev. Walter Sutton gave a moving testimony on *Mama Sutton, and Thra San Loo gave the story of how the idea of a memorial originated and how under the leadership of Saw Napoleon Keh it materialized. It was sad that he, the moving spirit behind it, was stricken with an illness just at the time of the dedication. Friends of Marian Sutton in USA who called themselves the Ruby Circle also helped to raise funds.

The Marian Sutton Memorial Church at Tavoy was dedicated Sunday, January 4. Mrs. Sutton served as an ABM missionary in this area with her husband until December 1941 when they evacuated to India because of the Japanese invasion of Burma. While they were in India Mrs. Sutton was called to her heavenly home. Now Rev. Walter Sutton is in his last term of service at Tavoy, having spent 39 years in missionary service. The new church, built by the Karens, is dedicated in memory of Mrs. Sutton, for the glorification of God.

It was wonderful that many members of the Sutton family were able to be present for this occasion. Walter Jr. flew up from Singapore where he holds a post in the diplomatic service of the USA. Misses Virginia, Flora and Mary Sutton, sisters of Rev. Walter Sutton came all the way from Baltimore and Mrs. Helen Sutton, sister-in-law, from Cincinnati, Ohio.

There are some who believe that the days of the missionary are over in Burma—that the people want to take over the work as they do in many other fields and would like the missionaries to give way—that there is a hidden resentment against them. If you

had gone with us to Tavoy, and had seen the love they lavished on Rev. Walter Sutton, Walter Junior and the rest of the Sutton family, and expressed it in so many ways, if you had heard them speak of Mama Sutton with tears in their eyes and sincerity in their voices, if you had seen the reverent affection with which they participated in the dedication service, then you would know in no uncertain fashion that the missionary still has a part to play in the life and work of the church in Burma, that we need and love those who are with us and we hold most dear the memory of those who have served and gone—such a one as Mama Sutton of Tavoy.

* *Mama is a title of respect and affection.*

VISITORS FROM FAR AWAY

Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. Jones of the Society of Friends, from Philadelphia, stayed at the Guest House from December 10-16 at the suggestion of Pearl Fruehan. They were interested particularly in the work of UNICEF and UNESCO. Mrs. Jones, the accredited representative of the Friends General Conference to the United Nations, was making films of United Nations activities in Southeast Asia to be used for educational purposes.

Dr. Charles J. Smith, Prairie Representative for the Mission to Lepers in Western Canada, and a Baptist minister for 35 years, made a trip to Moulmein to see the leper work there, and on his return preached at Lanmadaw Sunday Morning and at Immanuel in the evening during his stay from December 20-30.

Mrs. Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, after spending over two years with Miss Hughes in Taunggyi, left for India January 5 to join her daughter Lilla, who is a missionary there and returned to the U.S.A. with her in February.

Dean Charles E. Hendry, Director of the University of Toronto School of Social Work, and Mrs. Hendry spent January 16-21 in Burma on a World Brotherhood Lecture Tour.

Mr. and Mrs. Ora Huston, members of the Church of the Brethren, were on a world tour, stopping in Rangoon from Jan. 21-27. Mr. Huston is Director of the Division on Social Action of the Brethren Service Commission.

Roy. H. Boettcher of the Far East Broadcasting Company in Manila had conferences with Saw Lader and others on February 9 in Rangoon en route to India.

COMING—

Miss Rebecca Anderson arrived in Rangoon February 4th by Pan American Airways. She returned to Burma from furlough visiting friends and relatives in Honolulu, Philippines, Hongkong, and Bangkok on the way back to her work among the Pwo-Karens in Burma.

Dr. and Mrs. Marlin Farnum will be visiting Burma from March 3rd to 9th. Dr. Farnum is Administration Secretary for India of the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society, and is touring the work there before visiting Burma.

—GOING

Miss Lucy Wiatt went to Calcutta, India Febuary 14th for a month's vacation to visit her sister, Margo (Mrs. Chester Chartrand).

Rev. Erville E. Sowards, Field Secretary of the Burma Missionary Fellowship will be living Burma March 21 on the M.V. Derbyshire to go to the States for a year's furlough.

GOOD NEWS

Mrs. Herman Tegenfeldt successfully underwent chest surgery at the Christian Medical College Hospital in Vellore, South India, January 31. She is now convalescing at Kodaikanal, India where the Tegenfeldt children are in boarding school. Friends and loved ones are thankful to God for this good report. Mr. Tegenfeldt remains alone at his post of work in Myitkyina.

Continued good reports come from Dr. Shushila who underwent brain surgery in August, She is now able to begin some medical studies while remaining in the States. Her Christian witness is a joy to read: "The doctors are surprised at how well I am. They do not know how much people have been praying for me. I tell them when the opportunity comes. They asked me before I left what made me join the mission hospital, I told them it is this Bible verse, 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.' And I added I have little money but you see God has provided for this treatment."

AMERICAN BAPTIST MISSIONARIES IN BURMA

HAKA, CHIN HILLS,
Rev. and Mrs. R. G. Johnson

INSEIN, Seminary Hill
Miss Marion Beebe
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Clasper
Miss Dorothy Rich
Miss Alice M. Simmons
Miss Margaret Sawin(temporary)

KENGTUNG, Shan States
Kengtung Christian Hospital
Dr. and Mrs. Keith Dahlberg
Miss M. B. (Peggy) Smith

KUTKAI, A.B.B. Mission
Northern Shan States,
Rev. and Mrs. D. M. Crider

MAYMYO, A.B.B. Mission
Miss Ecco Hunt

MOULMEIN, Christian Hospital
Dr. Dorothy Gates
Miss Ruth Keyser
Dr. Bina Sawyer

MOULMEIN
Rev. and Mrs. C. R. Erickson
No. 12 Mission Road
Miss M. E. Shivers
No. 11 Mission Road

MYITKYINA, A.B.B. Mission
Rev. and Mrs. H. G. Tegenfeldt

PANGWAI, via Loimwe P. O.
Eastern Shan States
Rev. and Mrs. P. W. Lewis

RANGOON, 143 St. John's Road
Miss Rebecca Anderson
Rev. and Mrs. R. W. Beaver
Rev. and Mrs. R. E. Brown
Rev. and Mrs Milton Combs
Dr. and Mrs. F. G. Dickason
Rev. and Mrs. Lloyd James
Rev. and Mrs. Harold Schock
Rev. E. E. Sowards
Miss Lucy F. Wiatt
Miss Mary Ellen Williams

SUMPRABUM, Kachin State
Miss Lucy Bonney

TAUNGGYI, Shan States,
Dr. and Mrs. W. D. Hackett

TAVOY, A.B.B. Mission
Rev. Walter Sutton

TOUNGOO, A.B.B. Mission
Miss Charity Carman

YEDWINYEGAN, Myaungmya
Miss Emilie Ballard

ON LEAVE IN THE U.S.A.
Rev. and Mrs. L. A. Crain
Rev. and Mrs. E. T. Fletcher
Miss Mary I. Laughlin
Rev. and Mrs. David Stimson